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Book Reviews

Beginner's Greek Book. By ALLEN ROGERS BENNER and HERBERT WEIR SMYTH. New York: American Book Co., 1906. Pp. 392; 25 illustrations. \$1.25.

It is a pleasure to review a book constructed upon so sound a pedagogical basis, and containing so simple and so scholarly a presentation of material. Starting with the assumption that the pupil shall use a grammar when the study of Xenophon and Homer is begun, the editors have been enabled to eliminate much that tends to clutter up the pupil's mind. Especially significant is the omission of the "Attic second declension," the adjectives *χαρίεις*, *μέλας*, *τάλας*, rare contract nouns, and the perfect active subjunctive, optative, and imperative of the *ω*-verb. Words like *ναῦς*, *κέρας*, *Ἡρακλῆς*, *Ζεὺς*, *νεανίας*, *κάθημαι*, while omitted from the lessons, are printed in the "Summary of Forms" (pp. 280-327) after the lessons. Difficult constructions of rare occurrence in the *Anabasis*, e. g., *φθάνω* with the participle, are not introduced. The dual number is retained in the paradigms, but no instance of its use occurs in the sentences. The declension of the *ν*-stems is wisely presented before the more bewildering array of *ᾱ*-stems; and by a careful arrangement of material, that everywhere characterizes the book, the declension is presented as early as Lesson XVII. The method of developing the consonant verb is also noteworthy. The present, imperfect (with the second aorist), and the future tenses of the indicative are followed by the present and aorist subjunctive in Lesson XXII, and by the optative and imperative in Lessons XXIV and XXIX. Not until the middle and passive voices of the present, future, and first aorist tenses have been learned in all their moods is the pupil introduced to the first perfect indicative active in Lesson XLIV. Aside from the fact that the perfect tenses are less frequently used, this deferment of their presentation is justified, I think, by the consideration that the mastery of the verb by *tenses* in all the moods is easier and wiser than by the common method, which may, for the moment, be called the mood method, whereby the entire indicative mood is presented before any tense of the subjunctive is given. The latter method must involve an ultimate readjustment by tenses in the pupil's mind, and is therefore a source of mental waste, if not of confusion. The infinitive is not relegated to the end of the book. On the contrary, its use in simple sentences in indirect discourse is introduced as early as the eighth lesson. The relative pronoun is given in the tenth lesson, and participles are presented in the nineteenth. The advantage of an early acquaintance with constructions so common in Greek is apparent. Certain other matters, e. g., contract nouns of the *α* and *ο* declensions, contract verbs in *εω*, *-αω*, *-οω*, this book leaves to the very last.

The lessons are organically related and yet sufficiently varied to maintain interest. In the first fifty the pupil has the paradigms before his eyes. The

sentences, based largely on the *Anabasis*, really illustrate the principles of the lessons and are not too difficult for the beginner's comprehension nor too inane for his enjoyment. The exercises for translation into Greek are designedly short. Syntactical usages (of which there is also a summary with references pp. 328-36) are put as simply as is consistent with accuracy and are clearly illustrated. It is safe to say that at the close of the sixty lessons the pupil will know more Greek syntax and have come more easily by it than is possible with many a book of larger bulk. The *Anabasis* should not now prove too difficult; but for the convenience of teachers who may wish something easier by way of transition the editors have briefly (pp. 265-79) retold its story in simplified form.

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Homer's Iliad: First Three Books and Selections. Edited for the use of schools by J. R. SITTLINGTON STERRETT. New York: American Book Co., 1907. Pp. viii+610. \$1.60.

Professor Sterrett has put into his book an amount of text approximately equivalent to the first nine books of the *Iliad*. The text is based upon that of Van Leeuwen and is therefore very radical. Professor Sterrett prints the digamma; uses contracted instead of "assimilated" forms; restores the infinitive endings *-εμεν* and *-εμεν* for *-ειν* and *-εειν*, genitive ending *-α'* for *-εω*, dative *-οισ'* and *-αισ'* for *-οις* and *-αις*, *κε* and *κεν* for *αυ*, etc. He believes these changes have great pedagogical value, in that they simplify the student's work. With this it is hard to agree. One cannot be consistent in making the changes and they cause the beginner on the whole at least as many difficulties as they save him. The vulgate text, on which all the usual student grammars, lexicons, and editions of Homer are based, is after all the only safe text for schools. After the text come 53 pages on the dialect of Homer (meter, forms, and a very little syntax). More is done here on the meter and forms than the school student needs, although one feels the scholarly thoroughness of the work.

More than enough has also been done in the notes and vocabulary. In the matter of notes the need of our Greek students in schools is for less, not more, than our editions have been giving them. But Professor Sterrett has given them more. In some of the notes there is more learning than is good for the beginner (e. g., iii. 104; xvi. 407); others introduce refinements that would be a burden to him (e. g., i. 298; iii. 260; vi. 465); others tend to confuse him by too much discussion (e. g., i. 276; iii. 295); still others contain what might better have been left to the vocabulary, the teacher, or the pupil's own head. There is a tendency to overdo classification and analysis, as is seen in the case of speeches (e. g., i. 147 ff.) and particularly in i. 458, where the sacrificial ritual is divided into twenty-two ceremonies. If a good deal of this material is needed for some teachers, why not rather resort to a teachers' appendix? As it is, the notes seem more suited to teachers than to their school pupils. The vocabulary of 161 pages might also